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(raw transcript)

12 Seniors and Visually Impaired

>> Lorena Molina Irizarry: all right. So we're going to switch it up to have another person joining virtually after this panel we're going to show a video, but we're going to start first up with our panelists here in the room. We have Shivali Haribhakti, director of the senior planet program in Montgomery county Maryland. We're also joined by Lou August executive director of WildTech and Jose Manolo Alvarez, professor of courses in assistive technology in special education at the university of Puerto Rico.

We talked about being human centered earlier in the day and we're going to speak about seniors and the visually impaired, especially as technology becomes everybody's, you know, every day -- in everybody's every day life. How can we think better about ensuring that the access to digital tools is available for everyone? So with that, we're going to start with Shivali, you have a presentation and after each speaker will speak a little bit about

their demo or presentation we'll have an open conversation and hopefully we'll have time for questions.

>> Shivali: Thanks. Hi, good afternoon. My name is Shivali and I'm the director of the senior planet program in the mid central region of the U.S. And my team leads programs in nine states which are Maryland, D.C., Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois, and Indiana. So before I dive into my presentation, I wanted to just clarify a few acronyms since I know we've thrown out a lot, and also just some of the lingo that I'll be using in my presentation. My title is director of seernl planet program. Senior planet is the flagship program of older adults technology services, or abbreviated OATS. And OATS was affiliated with AARP about two years ago. So I am an employee of AARP and I was invited to speak today representing my company to talk about Internet and accessibility and specifically how seniors are one of the age groups that are kind of left behind when we talk about Internet access.

And I'll be referring to seniors. When I say seniors, I mean anyone over the age of 55 up, that's how AARP defines it. And I'll be referring to seniors and older adults interchangeably.

So first of all, why is this important? I wanted to start off with some data. So in the U.S. there are 22 million older adults that -- over the age of 65 who do not have access to wireless Internet. And over 39 million over the age of 50. And within this group there are further dispairts by demographic. So older adults with less than a high school degree or an income below 25,000USD are ten times more likely to be offline than their counterparts.

Black and latino seniors respectively are more than 2.5 and 3.3 times less likely to be online than their counterparts.

And in a study by the national social life and health project, Asian Americans of the foreign born population are the most likely to be offline.

Furthermore -- you can go to the other slide. Jose, you can go to the previous one. Yeah, thank you.

So, yeah, and so this slide kind of just has the metrics up on the board what I just spoke about. And I encourage you to read our report called aging connected on our Web site, OATS.org. That will go more in depth on this topic if you're interested. We spent years developing the research on this report. And another important thing to note is that, you know, just to put this in perspective, if you take all the folks, like all the people that I mentioned compared with everybody else who does have access to the Internet, we would

make up the second largest city in America. Like that's the gravity of the number of people that are being left behind and isolated because they're not connected.

So we can go to the next slide. Thank you Jose.

So how can OATS help? What do we do to address it? So we have experience in the field for over 20 years teaching older adults skills and helping them be connected and use the Internet to improve their daily lives. And the way we do this is through programming, predominantly classes which are held virtually and in person and they teach seniors everything from how to schedule a telemedicine appointment to banking online and to just fitness classes. So those programs are on our Web site called senior planet.org and I think at the end of -- I have a slide towards the end of the presentation that has that Web site for you all to visit.

So just one more slide before. Sorry. Oh, before. Yeah, thank you.

So this is another report that OATS put out. This is more about our experience teaching seniors specifically so that, you know, oats kind of researched why this is important and then our senior planet program actually does the field work and what we found through doing the work and teaching seniors was that over 50 percent of trainees in our program reported making a new connection using the Internet and they also reported a lot of gains and over half of the participants reported being less depressed than when they first came into the class.

There's of course like more data points on the slide and if you're interested you can go to the Web site and read the full report.

Go to the next slide, Jose.

So why does this -- how can you guys get involved if this speaks to you? There's a few ways. So if you are an older adult and you want to take advantage of our programs, you can go to our Web site, WWW.seniorplanet.org. We have free classes happening pretty much every hour of every day Monday to Friday. And you can just -- they're free. You can just go online and take them. If you're interested in doing an in-person, you can look at our Web site and see if we have programs near you and we're always expanding the locations we're offering them in. So if there isn't a location near you now, there might be one coming up.

And that's for -- that's like our B to C plan. And then our B to B plan, which I think appeals probably a little bit more to the folks in the room, just based on, you know, I have been here the last two days and hearing what people are he can spue being, it does seem like a lot of organizations are interested in solving this problem and hoping to get people

connected. So we have a free program where we are licensing our proprietarity curriculum to organizations who are doing the work and you can find out about it on our Web site OATS.org under senior planet licensing. And organization would apply -- you can -- there is an information session if you would like to know more but you can apply to the program and if you're accepted then you'll be trained in our program and trained how to use the curriculum to serve people age 60 and above and you'll have that license for 184. So it's currently a free program. I remember everyone to at least go and check it out. And we have over 200 organizations across the country in the program right now and we're continuing to expand.

And another way we can -- you can get involved is through participating in your state's digital equity plan. So we've talked about NTIA quite a bit. You know, we had some people from NTIA speak and as you know, they are the -- kind of the keepers of all of the money that the goffs has put like the 48 billion I think number that the government has identified for Internet and accessibility and so we are -- I think it was the panel, two panels before, but the example of that organization that's like dispassionate and doesn't any vested interest in the outcome that's us, you with don't have -- we're nonprofit, we don't have any vested interest we cannot apply for any of that money ourselves directly so we are a good example of a place you can go to, a good resource, we can point you in the right direction. You can tell you based on our experience teaching seniors how to come up with your broadband plan so it is equitable and that's what we're doing going to conferences like this and speaking and talking to lots of organizations in the community letting them know that we're here as a resource and we have that advisory role.

And yeah, if you want to do the next slide, Jose. So this is -- I probably should have put this up a second ago, but this is what I'm talking about, so this is the digital equity act and the way that we are responding to it as an organization. So the part that I was just talking about is on the right, the competitive grant program, but we are also trying to help by doing these three things, research, licensing and then on the ground training at our senior planet centers.

>> Is a slide after this one, Jose?

>> Jose, is there another slide after this one?

No.

>> Okay, so the next slide, I'll just save for Q&A if we need them. But I do just want to end on a personal note. So one of the slides before had a photo from one of our -- actually, our six year anniversary celebration as doing work in like Maryland we have been doing work

for -- this will be the seventh year and we had -- it was our first event in person after COVID. We had about 80 or so people, seniors come by and attend. We had a luncheon and then we had a time -- we had the county executive of Montgomery county speak as well as a lot of the seniors talk about their experiences with the program and it was just really nice to hear how much this has impacted their lives and how they feel like through COVID senior planet was kind of a lifeline for them because a lot of them were isolated, could not leave their homes, could not visit their grand kids, et cetera, et cetera. And I think our programs -- the pandemic really shed a light on just Internet in general but also this million dollar question that we keep asking, right, like are we create ago gap by having all of this money that the government is distributing but then what? What are we doing to make sure people are actually using these technologies? So I really recommend you check us out. We are doing program. We're kind of experts in this field and we would love to collaborate and partner with some of these organizations in the room.

Thank you.

>> Thank you so much.

[APPLAUSE]

>> Moderator: Up next, Lou, if you can talk a little bit to us about wildTech and you have been in this digital space building equity in digital -- first of all, a little bit of your work and what have you done and what are the lessons you can bring to the table.

>> Lou: Thank you. It is working. It's great to be here. I got here shortly before my presentation so I don't have a huge background on the participants. Can you guys jump on a quick poll here? How many folks here represent corporations or interests of corporate America?

So not many for corporate folks.

How about government? Government policy, that space? Or government agencies?

And how about academia? So schools, students, that kind of population?

Okay, so mainly academia. Okay, great.

So, you know, all cards up, I do not have an academic background. I'm probably Mr. practical. A little bit of my background, I worked for IBM in the early '80s, 1981 when the PC was introduced and me and my buddies were talking about develop programs for this brand-new box coming up, no software on it, all this kind of stuff. I was 23 years old -- 22

years old. Didn't have the guts to do it. And then on this day, June 11th, 1982, 41 years ago, my sister was murdered in a mass shooting in Detroit and I take every opportunity I can to say her name, Eve August. And something happens when something like that happens in your life. And that's that almost for me nothing mattered. I guess everybody response differently. For me nothing mattered. So I moved to L.A. and got into the P.C. business, something I didn't have the guts to do when I was working for IBM and ended up opening up a computer company, 24 years old flying to Taipei bringing in containers of computer equipment. We grew this enterprise with offices in California, Oregon and Washington. I love the west coast, never planned on leaving, but my wife's from this area. So for me, you know, that was this gravitational traction.   Ended up here. And love the D.C. area. Love the people here and worked -- ended up leaving technology for development for save the children and world vision, two huge technology -- excuse me, two huge NGOs where I had an opportunity to bring technology to countries all over the world. And that really gave me sort of a different kind of perspective on things. Ended up returning to wild tech about five years ago to become its executive director. Founded wild tech back in 2000. It was actually a nonprofit spinoff of my for profit business. And went back to become its executive director. The reason I'm going through all this background is because out of all of this, we came up with what we call the six pillars of digital equity. And I wanted to briefly go through those. Next slide, Jose. Thanks.

So the District of Columbia approached us three years ago and said can you implement something called the senior iPad program. It was in the middle of pandemic seniors needed not to be isolated and we took on the challenge and applied our six police cars. Seventh pillar which is workplace learning which we don't do so much with a senior community. We found that most seniors really aren't interested in starting businesses or employment escalation. Even seniors who may not have the most economic resources. I know this is a generalization but it is our experience. So pillar one device access. Major issue. A lot of the populations Shivali you mentioned, there's inn a economic underliar in that. A lot of these folks may not have a lot of revenue. One of the biggest obstacles we found was access to devices. They can't afford devices. And so with the senior iPad program, D.C. government provided the devices., their tablet computers, Apple iPads, easy to use for seniors, great tool. Turned out to be a real win there. I will say more generally for people involved in issues beyond just seniors, to me it's scandalous having been in this business for 40 years. The fact that technology recycles every three to five years and that every person on this planet doesn't have five computers at this point. We're 30 years into this computer revolution. I think a lot of that is because of planned object sew lessens now in the computer industry. For you who represent students or students who are active in whether it's climate change or equity issues, I would strongly encourage you to look at

planned obsolescence. How many you have have a mobile phone that has a battery that can be removed and replaced with a brand-new battery? Raise your hand if you have one.

Unbelievable. You have one. Jose, great job. The fact that we don't speak up about that is outrageous. Outrageous. And to me something that I learned when I worked overseas in Africa and -- especially in Africa. A lot of the dialogue that happens on a policy level is driven by corporate America. I'm a capitalist. I'm Mr. corporation himself. But when you're not getting other voices into the policy discussion, then you really get the interests of the corporate sector represented alone. And that has to stop. I can give you all kinds of testimony of how I've seen that in Kenya with the jubilee laptop initiative. Google it. I'll share with you why that didn't work. With other initiatives around the world. I don't blame corporations but theirs is the only voice at the table. It's got to change.

So device access, make devices reusable. Next pillar. Sorry for getting so passionate.

Internet access. Lot of great things coming out. I love the fact that the government's getting into this space. NTIA is fabulous, we love commerce. Making so many things happen that didn't before, especially Internet access for all.

Next slide.

In the senior iPad program D.C. government's providing that by the way.

Participant training. Okay. So, you know, huge issue. I think this doesn't need to be belabored. One thing I could say about working with seniors, a lot of our training because our seniors are homebound is over the telephone. That -- you know, we all know how hard it is to learn anything over the telephone, especially computer technology. So you got to have a multi-faceted training program as much as possible meeting learners learning style. We also don't allow our trainers to go into a senior's home. There's a lot of potential liability with that. So we meet at community locations, library. I love D.C. library. And I love the District of Columbia. It is a caring government. That's my testimony. And they're put ago lot of money into this, local dollars, not federal dollars into this program.

Then we talk about -- next slide.

Thanks.

Relevant useses. So this sometimes gets skipped over. You could teach people as much about how to use the technology but if they don't see the rev covenants if their life they're not going to stick with it. For us we integrate relevance step -- you know, step by step or side by side with the computer training and I think that is really critical, whether it's a new

computer user but especially a senior because a senior might not see the relevance. So we're offering Zoom calls as they're learning how to use Zoom -- learning how to use Zoom, various senior service providers, they sign up for services that type of thing. And then we also provide socialization. So as was mentioned already, seniors are very isolated. Anything you could offer for saicialsation is huge. Our most popular events, talent shows. The senior community is really talented. I mean, this is like -- they would win hands down any kind of America's glottal lent contest.

But also we offer dance contests. We offer -- the list goes on and on and I don't have them with me right now but the socialization stuff is very highly attended.

And then the last thing is we provide a venue for training providers to present on Zoom calls. So we probably have a hundred training -- 100 service providers for seniors who have presented their offerings on Zoom. And these calls are so highly attended. We always encourage the providers to provide freebbs. Giant has gift cards and they also have senior services in nutrition. OATS, great organization. We want to work with you guys to join this program.

The Alzheimer's association in D.C., multi-faceted. Cyber seniors up in Canada. Great program. So we don't want to control the dialogue with seniors. We want people who know about seniors and have a dialogue to share with the seniors to use our platform and start talking to hundreds of seniors. And where does that lead to? It even leads to politics. We have a backlog of D.C. council people now wanting to talk to this venue of seniors. So the sin nirg just keeps growing. It's a little vortex like. It sort of feeds on itself with hundreds of seniors attending venues that are so easy to present on from your little desk -- from anybody's desktop. Okay, I'm going to go faster.

Last two slides.

Tech support. Obvious. Critical element. Seniors get stuck just like everybody else. They need to move forward.

Last one, this is the most overlooked pillar. We learn this in every program we've ever done all over the world. And that's this idea of participant advancements. People stop eww using technology for a variety of reasons. I know NDIA, national digital inclusion alliance has something called the digital navigator program. And this is our virtual digital navigator program, where in our senior iPad program we have case managers who each have a few hundred seniors and they're monitoring attend DNSRF to classes. They're monitoring senior participation in a number of areas. If a senior is not participating, they call out to them and we often share that if we weren't doing this about 80 percent of the

active senior that is we have now would never have become active. 80 percent. So this activity, this idea of participant advancement is really, really critical. All right. That's it. Thanks.

>> Thank you so much Susan.

[APPLAUSE]

>> Moderator: Thank you.

We'll come back to all the panelists with questions, but want to invite Jose to talk a little bit about, one, your work, your own personal lived experience but also he's going to demo a technology tool and then we'll go right into questions and discussion.

[PAUSE]

>> Jose: Hello, hello? Can you hear me?

>> Yes.

>> Jose: Okay. Well I will -- good afternoon to all. I will demonstrate just some technologies that benefit -- that improve the quality of life for blind persons especially older blind persons, seniors. And especially when I do this demonstration is related to technology that use AI. That's a hot topic right now and a lot of people have concerns and we are in unknown territory but we know that a lot of bad things can happen if bad people use AI. But also I would like to demonstrate and to show you how AI can be good to improve life of persons and in this case blind persons.

So I'm going to start using my iPhone. I like to use iPhone. I will do also -- an Droid and later technology is going to be very quick, my demonstration because iPhone is a common technology. It's something that is is pretty widely used. I am phone you have to activate the screen reader. And then I will use the AI app to do my demonstration. With a screen reader, let me put the volume of my cell phone.

>> (Screen reader).

>> Let me turn down the speed.

>> (Screen reader).

>> Jose: I can. I download it. The screen reader I can easily go to the -- a Webpage. Right now and for example have access to the program of this event. Because that's the document, a Webpage but a lot of our seniors get intimidated with technology and does

not have the skill. So technology must adapt to that need and they will like to read the Bible, they will like to read the mail. That's on paper. So I just print the program just for my demonstration and this is an exact program you find on the Webpage but print. So technology can then make it a document and then the person have access to that information. But that's very common to our older blind citizen. So I will activate the app.

>> (Screen reader).

>> And I will put then the -- I will put the camera in front of the document.

>> 23,900, NASIG 2023 program, NASIG home. Program. Venue. Resources. Mode. All times are in the Washington, D.C. Eastern Daylight Time, EDT, time zone UTC-four. Captioning services sponsored by ICANN American University and --

>> Jose: Can you hear it?

[APPLAUSE]

>> They start to read it in less than a second. They will need -- they read a little bit so I need just about ten seconds so the buffer does shut out but what the processes they use the camera of the cell phone, they take a picture, like a video. Then by the Internet went to a server and in AI software apply the condition and read it to me. So that's the important of the Internet in that case. Because all the process are doing in the cloud. So isn't that wonderful that a person can have access to a text thanks to a technology and that combination of the technology and it is very powerful the technology.

Okay. So I will show you two more use and then pass to my Android.

>> (Screen reader).

>> Jose: I will put now the cell phone in front of my face.

And it's recognized that there is one person and he can tell me it is in the center or not. So I can take a selfie of myself over there very easy, but use more AI.

>> (Screen reader).

>> Jose: I will smile.

>> Processing.

>> 55-year-old man.

>> And then the AI say it's a 55 years old looking happy.

[LAUGHTER]

>> I will wish it would say 35 years old but -- just see that I say to the AI, just tell me what you think it is in front and that process give me that result. So what I have -- that is a computer. I have the power of a computer and a camera and that camera becomes my eyes in certain areas of my life. Let's do one more.

>> (screen reader).

>> Jose: I will say do the same but tell me what is in front of me.

>> A group of people sitting in tables in the room.

>> And I can obtain more information but I will leave then the iPhone because I will finish. One other of the necessary that older blind person shows is that sometimes using a screen touch technology is hard. Because it is not part of the generation. They get intimidated. I can do nothing with an iPhone over there but I can use an android. There are some androids they have bottoms and they feel more comfortable because it's like using a telephone for them and it is the same process. I just put --

>> 3:27 p.m.

>> And the screen reader of the android.

>> Go. Messages. Contacts. Applications. Settings. Application. Internet browser. Map catalog. Health and fit. Vision aids. Beepers, color indicator, Google lookout. GP Google lookout.

>> And I will put the camera and try to see, for example, if I put it in front of me.

>> Internet.

>> Oh, they find the text that is behind me. It's trying to read it.

[LAUGHTER]

>> Text, society, text, adding.

>> Well, you see the power. I can put it on a paper, whatever the text and they can read it. I will finish now my demonstration with another alternative. That's using wearable, in this case a Google Glass.

[PAUSE]

>> Jose: I put the Google glass now I'm hands free and you have older person that say I want to read the book and the Bible but I want to paste the page like I do before I lose my eyesight. So let's do the same. I just will put the text in front of the camera. Okay, let me -- let it go up and I will finish doing a demonstration using ChatGPT. Now I don't want to say that read to me. I want to obtain specifically information. So I will say not read it to me. I will say --

>> (Screen reader).

>> Jose: What is that document.

>> (Screen reader).

>> The document appears to be a program schedule for newing 2023 conference in Washington, D.C. with various events and sessions throughout the day, including welcoming messages and technical services sponsored by different organizations.

>> Jose: Can you hear it?

>> Yes.

>> They make a summary. So you think a person that has a learning disability, intellectual disability can then -- that information, I really want to know what is that? Don't read to me. Let's ask another question. I'm using my voice. Let's said what time begins. At what time this event begin?

>> (Spanish).

>> The event starts at 8:00 a.m. in the Washington, D.C. Eastern Daylight Time EDT time zone UTC4.

>> Jose: I say it start at 8:00 a.m. because all that information now the AI can answer and in that content they can answer to me. Let's make one more question. Let's say who's going to speak the welcome message.

Who's going to speak the welcome message?

>> (Spanish).

>> Welcome and opening remarks by newing 2023 chair and American University host.

>> It is the chair. I can then the name of that person or I can ask actually if one speaker will be in that program. So I will finish with this, that you will see the power of the AI and also

if they are using in a good way they can improve life and especially older blind persons. So thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

>> Moderator: Thank you so much. I do want to give the opportunity, you can hand the mic back for a second back to Manolo.

Can you give a little bit of background of the scope of your work and you have Manolo.net and you are professor at university of Puerto Rico researching and studying this. Can you speak acts about how -- we talked about scale earlier. How do these assistive devices and technologies could be scaled for the communities that are disconnected and specifically for the senior visually compared? What have you learned and what's some of that research as of rite now that you're working on.

>> Jose: Yes, of course. I think the most important is that people must have results and technology can do a lot of things but in this case in the demonstration it's a necessity of the person, a blind person will have -- older blind person will have a lot of necessary. Mobilization and mobility, independence, skills, living skill but for example in this case, if that person have a reading necessity, you must provide technology that they can do it in an easy way and they can obtain that results. Not complicate it. And then you can scale but if the technology is too complicated, you have to do some strategies for example smartphone is too difficult then you can make a shortcut using the voice I have doing with my iPhone. I said read text and they read the text. Well, the important thing is that as soon as the person interact with technology, we will need that their results are -- meet their needs and that is the way that you can scale and that is the way that they can then -- we can say that that is a practical use of technology.

>> Moderator: Thank you so much. And what is the goal? What are you trying to accomplish.

>> Jose: It is a Webpage I created back in 1996 when I was graduating and it just presenting information related to technology and blind persons. So I just find that if technology have been so beneficiary to me, I just love that other persons, especially Hispanic, all the information is in Spanish can also have that knowledge and benefit from that benefit.

>> Amazing demo.

[APPLAUSE]

>> Moderator: I know we have a video we're going to roll from a speaker that couldn't join us in person today but is directly tied to this topic, Luis Gallegos and I believe if we can play the video of I believe it's an eight minute presentation, then I want to open it up for a discussion.

>> Give me a second.

>> So --

>> Get on the mic.

>> Derrick: Investor Gallegos I mentioned earlier, he chaired -- he's the investor from he can door. He chaired the UN task force to investigate the rights on persons with disabilities and he was in Vienna a few weeks ago giving a keynote address for the zero conference, which awards prizes to accessible technologies and projects all over the world and he made this point of the interaction between persons with disabilities in older persons in a way that this panel really does a great job. I thought it was helpful. So we have this video even though he's not here.

>> Moderator: Thank you.

>> Let me tell you that I had a written speech for today. A very tailored, very diplomatic, very professional speech.

But yesterday I had an epiphany. I was sitting in the third role Caroline mentioned me explicitly. I have thanked her every time I've met her doing these two days because it was an extraordinary moment in my life and I -- which I would like to share with you. Twenty years ago, I was asked by the Latin American group in New York when I was ambassador of he can door to the United Nations in New York to preside the working group that was to analyze the possibility collaborating a convention for the rights of persons with disabilities. And I had an enormous opportunity that I recognized immediately, but as any he can doorian mission it was a small a and I asked my peers if we could.

(Captioned video).

[APPLAUSE]

>> Moderator: Thank you. He was not able to join us but we found very timely the scope and the context of the conversation.

And before we open it up for questions and discussion, I want to bring up this concept and I don't know if it's familiar. How many of you have heard about cool abilities? So this work

I believe started before it transitioned to people centered Internet which was founded by Vint the work of Shannon kef, Cindy, and Vuido, many people are disabilities have strengths that are sometimes unknown to themselves and ignored by the surroundings. Whether that's government and, you know, the societal systems that have provided blockers to people with disabilities. And they call this cool abilities. It's a notion that preventsous a new way of thinking of human ability in general and how do we think about -- differently about human values. It says that the concept itself refers to a specific range of human capabilities but the idea invites us to open the door and begin to think more holistically about human abilities in general. It reframes what we might learn from considered for each set of people, humans to be set up for success and work in life. It says coolabilities is a proposed concept for the enhancabilities in disabling condition. The ideal for what some individuals label as disabled can do well or even better than others in turns a specific spotlight on these. I encourage -- I mean, I just learned about this today. I encourage us to think about this notion of ability and disability in this new frame of thought, which is what are human ability that is we share, but that others might be assisted by like we saw on the demo today, by technologies by the Internet, by AI and other emerging technologies and how we better research this because I think the terminology and the taxonomy that we have been using perhaps is changing in this new digital environment. So just putting it out there and kind of help us think through this in more detail and is there a running microphone? We have -- I know we need to -- we have a hard stop at 4:15 but we have a few minutes for conversation.

>> First of all, I'd like to compliment the panel speakers and the opportunity to discuss the seniors digital rights. My name is Julianna. I'm a Brazil I can't know lawyer and software developer. I will briefly share a bit about social project we are doing in the City of Sao Paolo. Brazil is the second country in Latin America with more fishing and credit card fraud cases just behind Mexico. Through our research at the university of Sao Paolo we found out the more vulnerable groups is the plus 50 years old people. This year a group of lawyers, including me, started volunteer project to try to help people that were victims of financial frauds. At the same time, we have a rich population and other vulnerable groups as like children and lower income people we know the socioeconomics status in Brazil is super different depending of your region, of your origin and for example the color of your skin for example. As a software development and digital rights activist I struggle to believe technology basis education is one of the answers to having a health and safe digital environment soiled like to know if tech and older adults technology service has like a partnership with Brazil institutions because we are super open to have this kind of conversation there and I also to compliment professor Jose to show us the accessibility by

design that is integrated in some devices it shows how AI if it's used in a good way can be used to help some group of people.

Thank you very much.

>> We've done a lot of international work. We would love to advise Brazil on how to set up a program focused on seniors. We have a number of pillars and best practices that we could get translated into Portuguese. We don't have it there yet. Won't take long. I think that's what we'd have to offer. We probably couldn't go to Brazil but we'd be very happy to advise you.

>> Shivali: Yeah, so OATS as an affiliate of AARP, American association of retired people so we are just a domestic based organization. But I echo what Lou said about the advisory role. I don't think that a conversation would be like not helpful. So it would be great to connect.

>> Lou: One more thought. We do international programs every year. We go to tanna kneia every year. We have been talking about going to Brazil for the Amazon for a while. We might want to create some kind of a -- we bring technology specialists into remote high need environments to come up with solutions. Love to talk to you about 2024 program in Brazil.

>> Thank you very much.

>> Manolo, any thoughts on partnership?

>> Jose: Just one quick comment is that language today is not a barrier and I can ask very easy to -- in my demo that the technology translate that information into Portuguese or any language and also any technology today, any operating system you can very easily translate to your native language, you put it in the settings. So take advantage of that because in the past that was not that easy, but today, especially with AI, translation and language have not -- it is not a barrier.

>> Thank you so much, Moon. Thank you.

Go ahead.

>> Good afternoon. You spoke about the pillars for helping the Asian people. One thing you spoke about was the (Away from microphone) but there's another big problem that is right to repair. New York is built in such a way that it's not repairable. The parts cannot replaced with standard parts. So you have to buy a new one. And if you buy equipment

that is a thousand dollars like a phone, in three or four years you have to replace it because you cannot fix it, then it will bring you back to the first stage of (Away from microphone) but the worst problem is that aging people -- I can count myself in that place, but aging people have problems if you change your phone from one to another, it's likely the same. They don't get (Away from microphone). You cannot extend the life of the equipment, then it's against all -- I know there's a right to repair movement in the United States but is there any something that can be done to help.

>> I love that we have an academic group here because I would love to see more student activism in this space. We desperately need that. I spoke to -- I testified to the FTC when they held testimony for right to repair legislation. I think it was back in 2017 and, you know, that's a huge issue. And I think that's the second prong in the technology reuse picture I think the battery though is bigger and just to briefly say why. We are redeploying thousands of laptops that are from circa 2012. Those are 11-year-old lapps to. They're fully functional. Able to run all the software. People love to get them. But you can't do that anymore. Because the batteries on laptops, certainly on cellphones, are sealed inside and if the battery is not sealed inside, the Cmoss battery, battery that holds the configuration of the computer is buried behind the motherboard for no reason whatsoever exept to make it more expensive to change that little quarter sized battery than it does to replace the entire computer because it takes hours of labor to rip that whole computer apart. There's no reason for that. So I would love to see student activism. If there is one thing I could ask to do in this room, get your student involved in this. Imagine the carbon we would save if we never had to produce this stuff in the first place. Imagine the carbon we would save if we didn't have to earn that extra thousand dollars to buy that smartphone, the extra mileage driving back and forth to work because we had to put more money in our pocket to spend it on technology. It's a huge issue and it's stunning to me that it's not a bigger deal in our country. I would love it -- for students in America to take that cause up and really, you know, make a difference.

Thanks.

>> Moderator: Have a question here in the back but just a thought around what you mentioned and the student participation. I think there's -- when we go to human centeredness and being people centered, it's a lived experience like Manolo mentioned, how is it affecting my life and me and that is what makes a particular topic or theme resonate for people to activate around in the first place. Is it affecting me? Is it affecting my family? But what about if it's affecting our society and our community? And what are those values that society wants to uphold that says, well, it's not affecting me because I don't have a people with, you know, experience in disabilities in my family in my household

in my neighborhood but I care about this topic because X. And I think that is kind of a value system conversation that we need to have in the context of this where how do you get people to care about an issue care for other than reasons that it's about them? So just putting it out there. I know we have a question here in the back.

>> My name is Aro from Ghana. With regards to disability and technology and access to the Internet, I would like to know from Mr. Manolo how access to Internet has affected him? So for example, you went to read something from a paper and then maybe you don't have access to the Internet so maybe due to a connection problem you're unable to read -- AI is unable to read the document. How has maybe access to Internet or connectivity affected you -- have you ever encountered such a challenge? And what is your perspective when it comes to rural or communities who do not have the necessary resources to acquire these devices, you know, for example, the Google glasses that you are using, I know maybe there is some kind of cause related to applying these devices. So what is your perspective when it comes to cause related to accessing these devices and having Internet to use these devices? What is your perspective and the challenges related to it thank you.

>> Jose: Well, definitely the cost is a barrier and one thing to -- we can try to help with that is that, for example, government programs and if the government is efficiently and provide that programs that will support that person that need technology, at least here in the United States and Puerto Rico. Regarding the other question, it is a way that you can put that technology standalone and you don't require Internet access but it's more limited. So for me, it is important that in Puerto Rico, for example, we have more Internet and that the Internet, it has more speed. Because for me it's not fair that person have to use a hotspot when -- because these demonstration what I doing, that technology is not a ganl jet for that person. That technology is a powerful tool that is improving her life and they deserve to have the better Internet access that they can, but in rural sectors in places where Internet is not possible, it is a way that you can put it at least the text recognition or that you can do it offline. It is a way to do it. The optimal is of Internet access. We do not find and can obtain the ultimate results always but there's always a Plan B and plan C enable that technology can benefit that persons.

>> Moderator: Thank you. There's a question right here in the back.

>> I come from I understood and there are poor people and older people in my country as well and my observation, it's a well meant observation. It's not a criticism about America or Europe. I observe that it is far more difficult and far more harsh to be a senior citizen in your country, in Europe far more harsh to be poor in this country, not only that the normal issues of poverty but also they feel lopely and alienated and utterly uncared for but for the

government programs which does not cover the whole population of senior people and whole population of poor people. So congratulations on initiatives like this and I suggest that -- I mean, my wish is that these programs are taken forward, far and wide in your part of the world and at the same time the technology demonstration that I saw is impressive as a technology. It takes a lot of technical skills to have built something like this but it's quite disconcerting in the sense that even as an emerging technology after it emernls, after it becomes perfect a lot of things could go wrong and AI cannot interpret or understand what the person tries to communicate, especially if it's a senior citizen. And when the when it response in a different way, it will be stressful. And also, psychologically, the persons would be acutely conscience that it's a machine and not human. And would feel more alienated than supported. So these are some of the concerns that I have about using AI especially for something like this. And so no substitute for human assisted support. You have a lot of problem of unemployment and a lot of people without jobs and why not mix and match the jobless with the people who need care. Thank you.

>> Moderator: Thank you. Any comments from the panelists?

>> I'll jump in. It's a little painful to hear that because it's so true. When I've done programs around the world I would say the one common denominator that I hear from countries is that we like the fact that you have food security and that there's good jobs, but we don't like the way you treat your elderly. And I could say that with every country I've ever been to, especially I think -- I don't know if technology is a solvable issue.

Go ahead.

>> I mean, this was not a comment about how you treat your elderly. Just that there are several factors, the cost of living, the climate, and the effort and money that it takes to get out of homelessness, my comment was more about how easy is for the poor in a country like India or Bangladesh. And so it's very easy for them to get along. It's very easy for older people to get along and they are cared for, supported, but there are so many factors, a complex set of factors, not a question of attitude towards elderly, attitudes toward people. Your country is a very generous country in one sense. And so that something is amiss and so it turns out to be harsh and cruel even for the elderly and the homeless.

Thank you.

>> You're absolutely right. Let me ask the group a question. How many of you in this room live in the same city that your grandparents were born in?

>> One out of four.

>> Okay. One person. Two. Three.

If I asked that question in India in your village in India, how many people would raise their hand?

>> (Away from microphone).

>> So the mobility of our society is a huge contributeing factor. And so that's what I guess I'm trying to convey is that many of the elements of the society we live in, you know, contribute to senior's lack of welfare where, you know, in America.

>> Moderator: We have a question here in the back and one of the in the corner.

>> Hello. Ali from Pakistan. My question is about sustainability in these -- all these initiatives of vulnerability. How to bring the sustainability in all these initiatives because --

>> Moderator: Your question is about sustainability -- got it.

>> Yeah, because the industry is mostly leading the innovation and that's where the commercial interests come into.

>> Moderator: I think that's a challenging question given that sustainability is a challenging issue for every topic we've discussed but do we have any thoughts and I don't know from an AARP perspective, there is a kind of broader conversation about sustainability, whether it's services, assistive technologies, what are your thoughts on that?

>> Moderator: The question was about sustainability in the context of assistive devices, technology, programs, initiatives, how do you ensure sustainability?

>> Dhivya.

Okay. Hello? Thanks for the question. I didn't catch the last part about commercial interests or something. So I can't speak to that part. But the part about -- like to me -- I guess I'll define sustainability before I answer the question. So to me sustainability just means like longevity that the program will continue even after I'm gone from the company or, you know, my -- even if my success sorry is gone and I think that the way to do that, I think somebody spoke about it at a panel before but is to really connect like what you're trying to do with your business like goals and make it part of your kind of ethos. So AARP's like and the company I work for like the ethos is to really like end, you know -- or AARP foundation, for example, has -- their mission is to end senior poverty, right? So they put everything in there, like everything that they report out to people all alliance to that mission. So it doesn't matter, you know, if they have a new head of the foundation, they

know what their goals are. So that's what they commit to. I think from -- I don't know, just like personal experience, the work is -- it kind of just like propels itself. A lot of people hear about us through word of mouth because they had a good experience being helped whether it was in a classroom by a trainer or whether it was calling our hotline. We have a free tech hotline that you can call and get assistance Monday through Friday in English Spanish, and manda rine and when somebody has a good experience with us, that usually makes them want to come back and tell their neighbor about it or their friend or their relative about it. And so that kind of word of mouth and interest in the work that we do is going to be sustainable as long as we're in the field doing it.

>> Thank you. Manolo I, any thoughts from the -- I think the question -- I'm going to reframe correct me if I'm wrong, sustainability in the context of assistive devices and technology that is being put forth to address the problem set. Can you speak about that a little bit more, Manolo and what are your thoughts on that front?

>> Jose: Sustainability in assistive technology?

>> Moderator: Yes.

>> Jose: It is -- how can I it? It is a question that has so many factors that we need to consider being able to -- trying to obtain the best results. So, I don't know, the thing that I can do is -- so many factors that I can attend maybe the priority, for example, if we look at blind individuals depending on our countries, there must be priorities that are more important than access to technology, maybe access to basic needs, thus something that is very important of course if that in one country their priority is that basic needs, of course the resources that they have it I would put it over there and so that's the best result, the best answer that I can give you.

>> My name's Nancy Chang. I work for the goodwill in Washington state and I really appreciate Dr. Manolo's demonstration with Google Glass but that's not being manufactured anymore. So I think that goes to the sustainability question, but there's also AARP and your organization, you know, goodwill does -- I'm trying to pivot us towards refurbishing and E waist elimination for workforce development but like what's the opportunities here as this group for us to advocate for, you know, does snap glasses do the accessibility or, you know, it's like that technology is amazing but how -- even when Google Glass was being manufactured, it's like a thousand dollars. That's not very accessible. So just I think that's kind of what you're saying, right? Yes? No?

>> Can you restate your name and organization?

>> Goodwill. Nancy (Away from microphone).

>> Thank you very much following the question. Mostly I was talking about the way that the inventions are born and because the other population are -- have limitations to -- they already have like -- they already started to use something, they will get used of it and it's hard for them to change like the devices and the features.

So the technical support for the features, even the technology is growing too fast. In order to make it accessible the real feelings of the targeted community which is elder population has to take into account rather than the whole manufacturing industry and is mostly taking care of which direction, I don't know based on what. So that's why I was concerned about what are the plans in place to keep check on the direction?

>> This is sort of for Nancy too. Nancy what city are you from?

>> I live in Seattle but I look for the goodwill (Away from microphone).

>> Oh, nice. Our office is in -- we were in the top hat area. Ron Sims gave us a community. We operated for ten years.

Any way, I love Washington state.

Quick comment. We were part of a consortium of computer rebush beneficiary sheers called a program called AFTR.org. AFTRR.org. And there's well over 100 large refush bishes from around the country involved in that, including the right to repair as well as there's one issue that you're in Seattle. A lot of government advocacy that comes out of Microsoft. And, you know, you might want to get involved in those forums because it could really help stir the whole ship. The other thing that I haven't mentioned is what happens to offlease equipment? If you could tap into that, you're a better person than I am. Because I have not been able to decode that with the millions of off lease laptops and things that are on three year replacement cycles, what happens to that equipment? You know, if you have an access to Dell, if you have access to len November vow, if you have access to HP, the manufacturers are running the leafing now and we need to figure out what happens with that equipment. The rumor on the street is that it's destroyed because reuse would cannibalize the sale of new laptops. That is criminal in my book. Not legally criminal but morally criminal.

>> I think that this is -- I love to -- I'm excited to talk to everybody after the session but really I think in Seattle we just recently had a circular economy summit of some sort and I think that this is I feel like in this room we get to help drive that conversation and I know that it's

hard -- you know, you're asking a question that nobody really has an answer to but I think that's part of why we're all convening to see how -- what do we do when we leave.

>> Moderator: Thank you.

A question in the back and then we're going --

>> This is Mark Massy. Okay, these things, this laptop that I've got is a darn nice laptop. Got it from my when my inheritance came in. It's like four years old. They're supposed to design lifetime is three years. I have been in IT since before most of you were born. The fact is these things up until certainly very recently were easy as heck to work on. You just can't be afraid why people don't do things is they are afraid. And you really need to internalize internationally most profit making activities could not care less whether or not you live an economically 17 life. That's important. Because it says they're not going to make things for -- to last unless you kind of make them do it. Fixing these things, especially something as simple as a battery, is easy. Back when I was getting started in this field there was no such thing as a World Wide Web. Now, today, so many people are so family with a lot about computers that you just sit there with a Web and a couple scrap systems that you can buy for -- well, it varies, but they're not terribly expensive. To your question of what happens to the old systems? I wouldn't be surprised if there were things about that that were true, that is to say that some aren't destroyed but I do know that they are also available like through major computer retailers like Microsoft. You can get old computers and if you have the gumption and knowledge and a few tools it does take a few tools, you can rebuild these things. Laps tops in particular, the motherboards that is to say the piece that holds all the brains, they're not easily replaced. But so much -- no, I've got to say this. So the point here is people need to be encouraged to get over their fears of failure with technology. People can just do it. You just have to get a couple pieces, open them up, bang on them, break them, it's okay. And then you find it very easy to do. Companies are not interested in your survival. Companies are interested in making a profit. You have to take every single bull by the horns. And this is something that has to be taught because people are not taught these days. You have to take these things, whatever it is, tech or anything else and it's up to you to grab it, figure out how to make it right and fix the darn thing and we have to fight for the right to fix things. Totally agree with you. So I hope that message was rather long but I hope it kind of got through the barrier that is programmed into us by society.

Thanks.

>> Thank you so much.